

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of routing a transaction from a customer, the method including:
- receiving a request identifier associated with the transaction, the request identifier being derived from the transaction from the customer;
 - identifying an agent associated with a transactional processing system based upon the request identifier and agent data indicative of the capabilities of agents associated with the transactional processing system; and
 - prior to routing the transaction to the identified agent, reserving the agent which has been identified; and
 - routing the transaction to the identified agent wherein the agent generates a response to the transaction for communication to the customer.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, including supplying the agent data and the request identifier to a transactional routing controller which reserves an agent based on the agent data and the request identifier in accordance with a set of operating rules associated with the transaction routing controller.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the request identifier is derived from one of an Automatic Number Identifier (ANI), a Dialed Number Information Service (DNIS), a Touch Tone Selection (TTS) and an e-mail address of the transaction received from the customer.
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, including generating a data message in response to the request identifier, the data message identifying the nature of the transaction to the transactional routing controller.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, which includes receiving the agent data from the transactional processing system, the agent data identifying the agent capabilities associated with each agent of the transactional processing system.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein identifying the agent includes:

comparing the agent data associated with a plurality of transactional processing systems to the request identifier; and

determining a correlation between the agent data and the request identifier; and

routing the transaction to an appropriate transactional processing system in response to the correlation.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein determining the correlation between the agent data and the request identifier is determined in accordance with a set of associated operating rules.

8. (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 81, which includes communicating a reservation response from the transactional processing system to a transactional routing controller to confirm that the agent has been reserved.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9, which includes generating a routing message based upon the reservation response, the routing message indicating the identity of the agent which has been reserved.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9, which includes supplying the transaction to the agent which has been reserved based upon the routing message.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the transaction is supplied to a queue associated with the identified agent, the queue being configured to supply the transaction to the identified agent.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the transaction is supplied to the transactional processing system which then supplies the transaction to the identified agent.

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus to route a transaction from a customer, the apparatus including:

a transaction handler to receive a transaction and generate a request identifier;

a transactional routing controller to:

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~~(1)~~ receive the request identifier and agent data from at least one transactional processing system, the agent data being indicative of the capabilities of agents associated with the transactional processing system and the request identifier being derived from the transaction from the customer;

~~(2)~~ identify an appropriate agent associated with the transactional processing system based upon the agent data and the request identifier; and

~~(3)~~ reserve the agent and, after the agent has been reserved, supply the transaction to the appropriate agent.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the request identifier is derived from one of an Automatic Number Identifier (ANI), a Dialed Number Information Service (DNIS), a Touch Tone Selection (TTS) and an e-mail address of the transaction received from the customer.

16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein a data message is generated by the transaction handler to identify the nature of the transaction to the transactional routing controller.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the agent data from the transactional processing system identifies the agent capabilities associated with each agent of the transactional processing system.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the transactional routing controller compares the agent data and the request identifier to determine a correlation value between the agent data and the request identifier, the transactional routing controller using the correlation value to identify the appropriate agent associated with the transactional processing system to service the transaction.

B' 19. (Canceled).

20. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~19~~14, wherein the transactional processing system generates a signal confirming that the appropriate agent has been reserved.

21. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim ~~19~~20, wherein the transactional processing system supplies a reservation response to the transactional routing controller to indicate that the appropriate agent has been reserved.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the transactional routing controller generates a routing message based upon the reservation response, the routing message identifying the agent which has been reserved.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the transaction handler supplies the transaction to the agent which has been reserved based upon the routing message.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the transaction handler supplies the transaction to a queue associated with the appropriate agent, the queue being configured to supply the transaction to the appropriate agent.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the transaction handler supplies the transaction to the transactional processing system which supplies the transaction to the appropriate agent.

26. (Currently Amended) An apparatus to route a transaction from a customer, the apparatus including:

first means for receiving a transaction and generating a request identifier derived from the transaction from the customer;

second means for:

receiving the request identifier and agent data from a third means;

identifying an appropriate agent associated with the third means, in accordance with associated operating rules, capable of servicing the transaction based upon the agent data and the request identifier; and

reserving the agent and, after the agent has been reserved, supplying the transaction to the appropriate agent to generate a response for communication to the customer.

28. (Currently Amended) An apparatus to route a transaction from a customer, the apparatus including:

a transactional routing controller to receive a request identifier and agent data from a transactional processing system, the transactional routing controller identifying an appropriate agent associated with the transactional processing system which is capable of servicing the transaction based upon the agent data and the request identifier, the request identifier being derived from the transaction; and

wherein the transactional routing controller reserves the agent and, after the agent has been reserved, supplies the transaction to the appropriate agent to generate a response for communication to the customer.

29. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a sequence of instructions which, when executed by ~~the~~ a machine, causes the machine to:

receive a request identifier associated with a transaction from a customer, the request identifier being derived from the transaction from the customer;

identify an agent associated with a transactional processing system based upon the request identifier and agent data indicative of the capabilities of agents associated with the transactional processing system; and

prior to routing the transaction to the identified agent, reserve the agent which has been identified; and

route the transaction to the identified agent, wherein the agent generates a response to the transaction for communication to the customer.

30. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the medium supplies the agent data and the request identifier to a transactional routing controller.

31. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the request identifier is derived from one of an Automatic Number Identifier (ANI), a Dialed Number Information Service (DNIS), a Touch Tone Selection (TTS) and an e-mail address of the transaction received from the customer.

32. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 31, wherein a data message is generated in response to the request identifier, the data message identifying the nature of the transaction to a transactional routing controller.

33. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the agent data is supplied from the transactional processing system and identifies the agent capabilities associated with each agent of the transactional processing system.

34. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the medium compares the agent data and the request identifier to determine a correlation between the agent data and the request identifier in order to identify the agent capable of servicing the transaction.

35. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the determination of ~~the~~a correlation between the agent data and the request identifier is determined in accordance with a set of associated operating rules.

36. (Canceled).

37. (Currently Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim ~~36~~29, wherein the medium supplies a reservation response to a transactional routing controller indicating that the agent has been reserved.

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38. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the medium generates a routing message based upon the reservation response, the routing message identifying the agent which has been reserved.

39. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 37, wherein the medium supplies the transaction to the agent which has been reserved based upon the routing message.

40. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the medium supplies the transaction to a queue associated with the identified agent, the queue being configured to supply the transaction to the identified agent.

41. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the medium supplies the transaction to the transactional processing system, the transactional processing system being configured to supply the transaction to the identified agent.
